

ABSTRACT

The present invention relates to genes and genes clusters which are expressed in a tissue specific manner. For example, the invention relates to a group of genes encoding GPCR-like receptors that are involved in the function and activity of the immune system.

- 5 These genes are organized into a discrete cluster at chromosomal location 1q22 (the “immune gene complex”) and span about 700 kb of DNA. The region closest to the centromere comprises genes that are expressed predominantly in the thymus, while the distal region comprises genes which are expressed predominantly in the bone marrow and other hematopoietic cells. Another cluster of GPCR genes is located at chromosomal band 11q24.
- 10 These genes are expressed predominantly in pancreatic tissue, establishing this region of chromosome 11 as a unique gene complex involved in pancreatic function. A cluster of transmembrane and GPCR-type receptor genes is also located at chromosomal band 11q12.2. These genes are expressed predominantly in the spleen (hence, “spleen gene” cluster), as well as other tissues of the immune and reticuloendothelial system (RES), indicating that
- 15 establishing this region of the chromosome is involved in spleen, lymphoid, and/or reticuloendothelial function. Finally, genes coding for membrane proteins have been identified which are expressed selectively in bone marrow, kidney, pancreas, and retina.